

Political Media & Freedom of Expression

Enduring Understanding

Our rights to freedom of the press and speech include political cartoons, music, and forms of writing. Analyzing cartoons and lyrics broadens our understanding of important forms of political media.

Essential Questions

How do cartoons and music lyrics communicate political and social points of view?

How does the media influence voter's opinion?

Students Shall Be Able To:

C.5.6.9 — Examine ways citizens utilize the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights

C.5.6.6 — Analyze significant examples of music from various periods of United States history

H.6.6.1 — Determine the meaning of political cartoons

Materials Needed/Attachments

Attachment 1: Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

Vocabulary

bias

propaganda

symbolism

political cartoon

political media

opinion

fact

Teaching Strategy

1. Students will brainstorm different types of political expression (e.g., mass media, cartoons, internet, etc.).
2. Students will brainstorm and identify different types of propaganda. Discuss how bias and propaganda are used to influence people's points of view.
3. Discuss how political cartoonists use symbols to represent ideas in their messages. Symbols and other illustrations take the place of written words. Some cartoons may have words as labels, but to understand the message a person has to examine the drawings and symbols. Students will use the attached chart to identify the point of view expressed in a political cartoon(s) as selected by the teacher. (See Attachment 1.)

4. Create a political cartoon. Think about an issue or topic that is important to individual rights as guaranteed by the United States Constitution. Have students discuss what they think about the issue or topic and then design a cartoon to show their feelings. Exchange cartoons with other students and try to interpret the message.
5. Analyze and discuss the political point of view in selected lyrics, poems, editorials, and so forth.



Assessments/Rubrics

Class Participation

Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

Level 1

Visuals

1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.

Words (not all cartoons include words)

1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.
2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.
3. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

Level 2

Visuals

2. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?

3. What do you think each symbol means?

Words

4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?

5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.

Level 3

A. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

B. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.

C. Explain the message of the cartoon.

D. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?